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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002691

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: NINEWA PROVINCE: HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS  
OPERATE, BUT WITH DIFFICULTY

Classified By: Ninewa PRT Leader Jason Hyland, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

This is a Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) message.

Summary  
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¶1. (C) The Ninewa (Mosul) PRT Rule of Law section recently met with several key human rights organizations in the northern Iraqi province of Ninewa. In an encouraging sign, there is a surprising amount of human rights activity in the province -- given the inherent security risks in Iraq today -- by both the Government of Iraq (GOI) and non-governmental organizations (NGO). However, the Human Rights Committee of the Ninewa Provincial Council (HRC) has allegedly refused to meet with both the NGOs and the GOI entities, and many jails deny access to monitors from these organizations. The Iraqi Police (IP) in the province have established a human rights cell, although its effectiveness is unclear. Following is a snapshot of human rights organizations in Iraq's second-largest province.

Human Rights NGOs in Ninewa  
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¶2. (C) There are several established human rights organizations functioning in Ninewa Province. One of the most active is the Islamic Organization for Human Rights (IOHR). The IOHR has produced a website (in Arabic) about its work, but translation has not been done to make it readily accessible to the international community. It has allegedly run into a lack of cooperation from the HRC (which refuses to meet with it) and the local jails, citing a lack of access and transparency. The IOHR focuses mainly on prison transparency and filing claims on behalf of individuals whose family members have been arrested. (Note: We are seeking further information about this organization, and will report septel.)

¶3. (C) The Iraqi Red Crescent, which faces problems with access to jails, security, and transportation, also functions in the province. However, due to its association with the previous regime, not all sectors consider it a neutral party. Other NGOs include the women's wings of the various political parties, all of which focus on the rights of women within their party.

Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights  
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¶4. (C) The Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) functions in the province, although it runs into the same problems as NGOs in terms of the HRC. The PRT will meet with the HRC to

follow up on these allegations on August 13. Some jails have blocked access and refused to cooperate with the MoHR's efforts to gain access to information about cases. The MoHR has not yet made its reports on the situation in the province publicly available.

¶5. (C) Bio Note: The Head of Office for the MoHR in Ninewa is Nashwan S. Mohammed Ali (please protect). Ali is a lawyer by training and has professed to be devoted to the cause of human rights. He is very forthcoming with the PRT with information and provides translated copies of reports done by the MoHR. Ali understands English, although his spoken English is very poor. He prefers to speak in Arabic. End Bio Note.

Iraqi Police HR Cell  
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¶6. (C) The Iraqi Police (IP) in the province has a Human Rights Cell, and the PRT recently began to meet with it. The IP offered to provide copies of human rights reports to the PRT. The Iraqi Police have not yet provided human rights awareness training to police on the job or in the training of new recruits.

Comment  
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¶7. (C) Surprisingly, there are human rights organizations (both GOI and NGO) functioning, at least minimally, in Ninewa Province. The improved, but still difficult, security situation and the alleged lack of cooperation by some provincial authorities have hindered the effectiveness of these organizations. The PRT will continue to work with

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these organizations to gather information on the human rights situation in Ninewa and support other constructive activities, and remains ready to engage other organizations that may have up until now kept a very low profile.

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